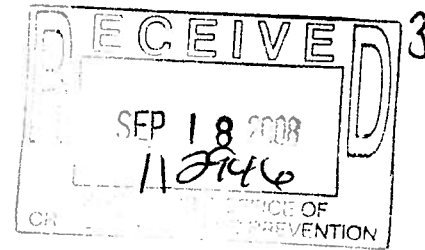


September 16, 2009



Commission on Capital Punishment
300 E. Joppa Rd.
Baltimore, Maryland, 21286

Gentlemen:

It is just a matter of time until the death penalty will be abolished in the United States. How many people have to be executed before this country wakes up.

I am, Davida Oken, mother of Steven Oken, who was executed on June 17, 2004. Do I need to tell you that the State of Maryland has created a family of victims numbering at least 12 persons. That is the number of Steven's immediate family who loved and supported him.

Just what did this execution prove? Did it prove that our governor was a good governor? He did what the politicians thought was proper. We thought it was retribution. Mr. Ehrlich gave the victims family what they wanted. What about us? We are victims too. What did the execution do for us? Did the execution save Maryland any money? Did this execution prevent further murders in the State of Maryland? The State of Maryland committed murder.

Did Maryland jump the gun? The study on the death penalty was ordered long before Steven's execution, during the Glendenning administration and found to be improperly administered. What happened? Why did they go forward? Issues on the administration of the lethal injection in the state were also found. What happened?

Our family could have healed in 1987 when this horrific act was done and so could have the victims family. Steven could have been given life without parole or returned to the State of Mine where his prior conviction was. Why did Governor Schaffer refuse to return him? Strictly politics. Families on both sides could have been saved the exposure of trials, attorneys and and terrible, terrible pain.

Why was this necessary? Life without parole is the answer, not the death penalty.

Capital punishment is not valid and not necessary in our society today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Davida Oken'.

DavidaOken